

Message Text

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PAGE 01 CAIRO 08086 131746Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 INR-10 PA-01 SS-15 SP-02 NEAE-00

IO-13 /052 W

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P 131728Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6611
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

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E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: EPR, EG, IS, XF
SUBJECT: FONMIN KAMEL'S COMPLAINT ABOUT BACKGROUND
- BRIEFING

REF: STATE 63453

1. WHEN WITH FONMIN KAMEL TODAY, HE SAID HE WISHED TO RAISE A MATTER. HE THEN READ TWO EXCERPTS FROM AFP AND REUTERS STATING THAT "SENIOR AMERICAN OFFICIAL" HAD TOLD PRESS THAT EGYPT, JORDAN AND ISRAEL HAVE AGREED THAT FINAL SETTLEMENT OF PALESTINIAN PROBLEM BE POSTPONED FOR A TIME. THIS HAD BEEN CONVEYED TO ATHERTON DURING LATTER'S RECENT SHUTTLE. MOREOVER, EGYPT AND JORDAN VIEW BEGIN'S SELF-RULE PROPOSAL AS A STARTING POINT FOR NEGOTIATIONS RE A TRANSITIONAL REGIME. PROBLEM CONTINUES TO BE, ACCORDING TO "SENIOR AMERICAN OFFICIAL," ISRAELI UNWILLINGNESS WITHDRAW AFTER FIVE YEAR TRANSITION PERIOD AS EXPLAINED TO ATHERTON. THIS ISRAELI POSITION PRINCIPAL OBSTACLE TO DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES. EGYPT AND JORDAN DO NOT WISH IMMEDIATE WITHDRAWAL OF ISRAEL FROM WEST BANK/GAZA.

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CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 CAIRO 08086 131746Z

2. KAMEL EXPRESSED UNHAPPINESS THAT "SENIOR AMERICAN OFFICIAL" HAD TOLD PRESS THAT EGYPT ACCEPTS BEGIN PROPOSAL FOR SELF-RULE AS STARTING POINT FOR NEGOTIATIONS. IT DOES NOT. SUCH A STATEMENT IS "BAD FOR EGYPT" AND UNDERMINES GOE POSITION.

3. HE ASKED IF WE COULD PROVIDE TEXT OF EXACTLY
WHAT WAS SAID ON THESE POINTS AND EXPRESSED HOPE DEPT
SPOKESMAN WILL AVOID RELATING GOE POSITION ON SENSITIVE
MATTERS AFFECTING FUTURE OF PALESTINIANS.

4. I DID NOT TELL HIM "SENIOR AMERICAN OFFICIAL" WAS
ATHERTON, BUT INDICATED AWARENESS OF PRESS BACKGROUNDER
WHICH HAD BEEN GIVEN IN WASHINGTON. TOLD HIM MY RECOLLEC-
TION OF WHAT HAD BEEN SAID BY "SENIOR AMERICAN OFFICIAL,"
IN ANSWER TO QUESTIONS, WAS THAT IT WAS SOMEWHAT DIFFERENT
FROM AFP AND REUTERS REPORTS THAT HE HAD READ TO ME.
IN ANY CASE, WHILE RECOGNIZING SENSITIVITY OF ISSUE,
I THOUGHT IT DESIRABLE BE CANDID WITH PRESS ON THIS
SUBJECT. IT IS CLEARLY HELPFUL TO PEACE EFFORTS IF
EGYPTIAN READINESS IN PRINCIPLE TO ACCEPT TRANSITIONAL
REGIME IN WEST BANK/GAZA IS KNOWN. I RECALLED PRESIDENT
SADAT HAD HIMSELF PUBLICLY STATED THAT, IF BEGIN'S SELF-
RULE CONCEPT DEVOLVES INTO SELF-DETERMINATION DURING
INTERIM PERIOD, IT MIGHT BE AN ACCEPTABLE BASIS FOR
DISCUSSION. SADAT'S STATEMENT CLEARLY INDICATED PUBLICLY
ACCEPTABILITY OF A TRANSITIONAL REGIME IN WEST BANK/GAZA.

5. KAMEL, WHILE ACCEPTING POINTS I HAD MADE, REMAINED
UNEASY ABOUT ANY SUCH STATEMENTS. HE ARGUED THAT THEY
ADD TO EGYPT'S CURRENT ISOLATION IN ARAB WORLD. HE HOPED
WE WOULD AVOID FURTHER PUBLIC DISCLOSURE OF GOE POSITION
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PAGE 03 CAIRO 08086 131746Z

VIS-A-VIS PALESTINIANS.

6. COMMENT: KAMEL'S EDGINESS ABOUT "SENIOR AMERICAN
OFFICIAL'S" STATEMENTS AS REPORTED BY AFP/REUTERS IS
A FACTOR OF HIS AND MINSTATE BOUTROS GHALI'S GENERAL
CONCERN ABOUT GROWING EGYPTIAN ISOLATION IN ARAB WORLD.
IT MIGHT EASE HIS MIND A BIT IF HE WERE SHOWN PERTINENT
PORTIONS OF ATHERTON BACKGROUNDER, WHICH ARE NOT AS STARK
AS AFP/REUTERS EXCERPTS. ALTHOUGH THIS MIGHT HELP A BIT,
I SUSPECT HE WILL CONTINUE TO BE A NERVOUS NELLIE ABOUT
ANYTHING THAT IS SAID ON GOE'S ATTITUDE TOWARD
PALESTINIANS. PLEASE ADVISE WHETHER I MAY IDENTIFY
SENIOR AMERICAN OFFICIAL AS ATHERTON AND SHOW HIM
PERTINENT PORTIONS OF REFTEL. EILTS

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NNN

Message Attributes

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